



# UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of March 20, 2019

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## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

### Spring Worship Calendar!

The Spring Worship Calendar is ready to publish and post! Please find it on our website with this newsletter and print out a copy for your house (and maybe an extra copy or two for friends you think might be interested in coming to UUSO with you some Sunday.) Highlights this quarter include:

#### • Great Pulpit Guests

**Lisle Dalton**, Professor of Religious Studies at Hartwick, sharing the spirituality of trains on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Our own, **Beth Small**, Associate Professor of Spanish at SUNY, exploring the expanding nature of living in another country on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Aileen Fitzke**, Ministerial Intern at UU Congregation of Binghamton, taking us deeper into the liminal spaces on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

UUSO member, **Kim Yousey-Elsener**, Director of Student Affairs Assessment at Binghamton University giving us ministry of baking on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### • Holy Days & Annual Rituals

**Easter Sunday** - I'll be celebrating and exploring the Christian holy day and the meaning of the resurrection story for non-Christians on April 21<sup>st</sup>. (For those wondering, I won't be wearing my jester vestments this year.)

**Flower Communion** – The traditional start Unitarian Universalist ritual service will ring in Summer on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We'll be "Joining Together for Justice" for the UUSC's Social Justice Sunday on April 14<sup>th</sup>. And we'll celebrate our Religious Education program and honor our teachers and volunteers on April 28<sup>th</sup>. And just for fun, we'll have the annual Question Box sermon on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

It's going to be a grand quarter of worship. See you there!

#### Communal Read – After the Good News

This month, I'm reading "After the Good News" by my classmate and colleague, the Rev. Nancy McDonald-Ladd (currently serving as Senior Minister at the River Road UU Congregation in Bethesda, MD.) Her book is available at the UUA Bookstore, inSpirit, for \$16.00 (and available via Kindle on Amazon for \$9.99). The UUA bookstore offers a discount of 10-20% for multiple orders. If you would like to order the book together as a group for the discount, please let me know. I'll be scheduling discussions of the book for April.

Cooperatively,

Rev. Craig

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The children in our religious education program had a Children's Worship service on March 17. It was our annual service to celebrate our connection with Youchaou's School in Mali.

Our church relationship began in 2005 when children in the RE program wanted children to correspond with in Africa. Zanna McKay told us about Youchaou Traore, who was someone she learned of while she lived in Mali. He was trying to grow a school for children in his neighborhood where children had no other access to education. I began to exchange emails with him. He was (and is) someone who truly makes a difference for the people around him. Members and friends of our church began to meet to plan how to best assist him in his work. We formed what was then the Mali Task Force, now called the UUSO Mali Education Project. The purpose of the group remains (as always) to make a difference in the lives of children in the Kalabonkoro neighborhood of Bamako, Mali, by coordinating the sponsorship of 55 students to attend Youchaou's School. These are children who would otherwise be unable to attend school at all. The school has grown from a small apartment to a large complex housing all grades as well as a kindergarten, vocational school, library, and a high school. These children are given the tools to become better equipped to make a difference for their families, their community and their country. It has grown to be considered one of the best schools in Mali!

Youchaou has touched the lives of all who know him. He visits Oneonta periodically and hopefully you will all have the chance to meet him. He has given sermons and talks at our church and we hold banquets in his honor. He visits local schools and colleges. He has spent time with the children in our RE program.

I want to celebrate this relationship each year by letting our young UU's know the difference children made by helping us reach out across the ocean to Youchaou's school. We remember how, when we first corresponded with Youchaou, his few classes had only one box of colored pencils to share between them. For instance if someone needed the green pencil they might have to borrow it from another classroom. The RE children of 2006 wrote letters to children at the school. They made artwork to sell during coffee hour to send money to the school. We continue to assist him in any way we can. There will be a fundraiser for his school on March 23<sup>rd</sup> featuring a delicious Kenyan banquet. There will be a short filmed conversation with Youchaou from his visit to Oneonta last summer. For reservations call (607) 433-1272. All proceeds are donated to Youchaou's School.

For this worship service we talked about living conditions in Youchaou's neighborhood. We spoke of some of the ways we may be different and also ways we are all the same. We learned more general information about Africa such as that Africa is not a country but made of 54 countries. I read my favorite Anansi the spider story, Anansi and the Moss Covered Rock. For snack we tried some of the delicious fruits that Anansi tried to trick away from his neighbors in the story. Many of the children knew other Anansi stories. They learned that these are some of the many stories that come from West Africa. For our art project we made necklaces and bracelets using some of the beautiful beads Youchaou gave our RE program.

We sang the chorus of the song, "Across the Wide Ocean," by Sarah Pirtle:

*Across the wide ocean, across the wide ocean.  
I hear you calling me, oh my friend.  
I hear you calling me, oh my friend.*

In gratitude for the many gifts we have in our connection with Youchaou and his school,

Susan Ryder  
UUSO Director of Religious Education

### COME ONE, COME ALL

There's still room at the annual Spring fundraiser presented by The Mali Education Project. The evening program features a filmed conversation with our friend Youchaou Traore, plus glimpses of Malian life.

**Saturday March 23, 6-9 PM, Chapin Memorial Sanctuary (12 Ford Ave.)**

\$15.00/Adult | \$10.00/child over 5 | Free childcare

Doors open at 5:30 for browsing (and buying!) at the Mali market!

Kenyan Banquet at 6:00 (non-spicy, GF, and vegetarian options available!)

For reservations: (607) 433-1272, or email [pbstelling@stny.rr.com](mailto:pbstelling@stny.rr.com)

### CANNED GOODS NEEDED!

The Annual RE Easter Can Hunt will be on Easter Sunday. Please leave your canned goods donations in the box at the entrance to church on Sundays or in the box on the back porch by the office at OBH between now and before service on Sunday April 21. After the Can Hunt festivities, cans will be donated to the St. James Food Pantry.

—Thank you from the RE Committee

### PIE DAY A BIG SUCCESS—THANKS TO ALL

A huge thank you to everyone who supported Pie Day on March 17. We raised \$558!

A special thanks to all the pie bakers listed below---what a gift from the heart. We are blessed with so many generous and wonderful bakers.

Jane Backman  
Jenny Bagby  
Megan Brennan  
Leah Bridgers  
Katy Bridgers  
Bob Brzozowski  
Jennie Buffington  
Margaret Davis  
Nathan Elsener

Kim Elsener  
Amy Forster Rothbart  
Annemarie Hosnedl  
Zanna McKay  
Suzanne Miller  
Kathy Paranya  
Mary Ruhoff  
Kate Seeley  
Alice Siegfried

Grace Smith  
Rosalind Thomas  
Tracy Verma  
Evelyn Warren  
Keith Willcox  
Arlana Young  
Lisa Zuend-Misner

Thanks to the army of people who pitched into help with the set up and clean up and to all those who bought raffle tickets and pie slices.

With gratitude and love,  
The Stewardship and Fundraising Committee

**BRING YOUR LUNCH AND  
HAVE A FAITHFUL CONVERSATION.  
TUESDAYS, AT OBH, @ 11:30AM.**



## RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES

Saturday, April 6, 2019 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

**We are hosting this UUA Central Regional Group event and it will take place in our UUSO Sanctuary. Our regional contact, Rev. Evin is the facilitator!**

Covenant is the silk that joins UU congregations, communities, and individuals together in a web of inter-connection. The practice of promising to walk together is the precious core of our creedless faith. But what do we do when covenants are broken? Restorative practices, which involve the skilled use of Circles, provide an opportunity to identify and address harms, restore relationships and mend community. Grounded in the practice of Compassionate Communication, this training will give an overview of restorative practices, skills and will include hands-on Circle exercises to use what you've learned. We especially encourage Youth Leaders, Committees on Ministry and Church Boards to attend. Restorative Practices are grounded in familiar practices: Youth Touch Groups, Covenant Groups, Chalice Circles, and respectful, direct, honest communication. For Youth and Adults!

Value of Circles:

Leadership is Shared

Grounded in Mutuality

Deep Listening

Personal Connection

Based on Respect and Accountability

Inclusive

Youth are welcome to attend this event. A youth must attend with their parent or guardian or attend with a completed permission form and a sponsor. Download the form as a [pdf](#) or [word document](#) accessed at the link below.

Cost: Sliding scale \$15-25 includes lunch and booklet, We use a sliding scale so that if you can pay more, please do and if you can't, that's ok. If you are unable to pay this amount, you can take a partial or full waiver. Please indicate this on the registration form. Childcare is available, see the registration form.

**Register at:**

<https://www.uua.org/central-east/events/region/restorative-practices-faith-communities-918-1>

Deadline for registration is April 2, 2019

## GETTING TO KNOW UU— MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

Want to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and UUSO? Interested in meeting other people new to the community? Considering membership? Then please join us for this year's Getting to Know UU!

Rev. Craig Schwalenberg will present this three-part series. Whether you're planning to sign the membership book or simply curious to learn more about our congregation and its history, you are welcome to join us for conversation and fellowship. Childcare will be provided upon request.

Meetings will be held Saturdays from 10:00 am- 12:00 pm at the Olympia Brown House on the following dates:

4/13/19

4/20/19

4/27/19

Please RSVP by contacting Rev. Craig or Evelyn, our Office Administrator.



If you have youth between the ages of 8 and 17 who are looking to connect with other UU Youth, enjoy limitless fun in the Adirondack Mountains, eat s'mores, create art and music, and play games and sports while learning about the importance of community all shaped by Unitarian Universalist values, welcome to Unirondack.

What truly makes us unique is the energy, caring, and creativity of the people who call Unirondack home. Inventiveness and youth empowerment abound as our staff aim to provide a space of excellent programs and promote the acceptance and respect of all campers.

At Unirondack we live the values that are inherent in Unitarian Universalist principles — acceptance, compassion, and decision-making through the democratic process while co-existing in an intentional community together.

For more information, visit [www.unirondack.org](http://www.unirondack.org), or the church office for a brochure. We can also be reached at [Director@unirondack.org](mailto:Director@unirondack.org).

## **DRAWING THE CIRCLE WIDE: PRE-EMPTIVE RADICAL INCLUSION** 2019 SEAWAY SPRING GATHERING

**Friday, May 3, 2019 - 7:00 pm EDT to Saturday, May 4, 2019 - 4:00 pm EDT**

Come join UUs from across New York for a day of worshipping, learning and connecting!  
(Registration deadline is April 30)

### **Friday night Gould Discourse: Kids These Days: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Hope Again with Rev. Frances Manly**

The young people from Margery Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, have done what nobody of any age has managed to do before: turn yet another instance of senseless gun violence into a national movement that goes far beyond just school shootings and is actually beginning to see results. Now other young people are building an international movement to address climate change. Not only can they give us hope for the future, but they challenge and inspire those who are no longer so young to support them, work with them, and follow their lead to do what we so often say we want to do: build a better world.

For full program details, please see this link to the [UUA CER Website](#).

### **SHELTER ROCK CON**

Attention young adults (ages 18-35)! Shelter Rock is hosting a social conference Pulp fictCON April 26-28th. A weekend full of interaction, fun, and learning! We have some great surprises in store. The deadline to register is April 18th. More information can be found on the Facebook event page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2319643624933871/?ti=as>

We'd love to see you there!

## **SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD**

The Board met on March 8 at 7pm via Zoom online conferencing. We approved the January minutes and reviewed staff and financial reports.

### **End of the Year Appeal**

The Finance Committee informed the Board of the successful year end appeal and provided the disbursement numbers for those who donated to the "general" category. The chart listing the amounts donated to the appeal will be provided in a future newsletter.

### **Finances**

The Finance Committee presented names of potential candidates for committee members. The Board agreed with the list under the condition that each candidate is a current UUSO member. The financial records are being updated during the transition to our new bookkeeper, Taylor Czyzewski. The Board will review updated statements during our March meeting. Board members have agreed to assist the Finance Committee with counting the collection plate after services.

### **Ministry Assessment on Worship**

Five focus groups consisting of a total of over 20 member and friends of the congregation were facilitated by members of the Board and Committee on Ministry to answer four questions regarding our worship at UUSO using the appreciative inquiry model. The board nominated 3 members of the facilitation team to meet as a subcommittee to analyze the input obtained during this process and consider the conclusions we may draw from this process. We will be reporting the results to the entire congregation.

### **Sounding Board**

Some questions revolved around communication within our congregation, namely whether we will still receive notification of the upcoming service details during the week. The answer is yes, this will continue. Also, there is concern that those not at the service each Sunday miss the Joys and Concerns. We will consider possibilities for helping these members and friends feel better connected with what is shared.

### **Next Board Meeting:**

Our next BOT meeting will be on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. Congregants are welcome to observe. We will hold the Sounding Board on Sunday, March 24 after the service to hear any comments, questions, or concerns to be brought to the Board.

## **SPRING CHALICE CIRCLE**

Rev. Craig will be facilitating a short-term Chalice Circle this Spring quarter. Chalice Circles are also known as Covenant Groups and Small Group Ministry. This Chalice Circle is open to anyone who would like to get to know others in our community while exploring our spiritual depths. Those experienced with Small Group Ministry and those considering it for the first time are equally welcome. We'll start with a brief, structured check-in, then share a reading on a chosen topic, and then have an attentive discussion of the topic. The Chalice Circles will take place on Fridays from 10a - 11:30a on 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/10, 5/17, 5/31, 6/7, and 6/14, and will meet in the OBH Parlor/Mara Kern Library. It is important that participants commit to coming to at least 6 of the 8 sessions. The Chalice Circle will be limited to 10 participants. If you would like to participate in this short-term Chalice Circle, please contact Rev. Craig.

UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES  
SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



The Bible says "You shall know the truth,  
and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)  
Which truth? Whose truth? What is Truth?

*\*Children to Classrooms*  
With music by the UUSO Choir and Music Director  
Tim Horne  
Worship Associate: Cathi Wiltsey

Coffee Hour Host: Pam Strother & Brian Bendlin  
Ushers: Dave and Meg Ainsworth  
Chancel Table: Suzanne Miller  
Sound System: Scott Segar



Paul Tillich said,  
"Faith is the fulfillment of Reason."  
He also said it "...is that by which we are grasped."  
What does it mean for us to have faith?  
Faith in what? Faith in whom?

*\*Children to Classrooms*  
With music by the UUSO Choir and Music Director Tim  
Horne.  
Worship Associate: Julian Pecenco

Coffee Hour Host: Pam Strother & Cathi Wiltsey  
Usher: Rosalind Thomas & Kim Yousey-Elsener  
Chancel Table: Rosalind Thomas  
Sound System: Paul Carter

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA**

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@UUSOneonta



## **UUSO DEADLINES:**

**UU News Articles:** Deadline for the week of April 3rd issue is April 1st.

**Order of Service Announcements:**

Wednesday a.m. before the Sunday Service

**Verbal Announcements:**

Contact Worship Associate by Friday before Service

## **GREEN SANCTUARY CORNER**

Remember Kevin Schultz' presentation on Climate Change?

Here's another way he recommends to work toward reducing your household's carbon emissions by 20%:

Wash clothes in cold water. They get just as clean with today's detergents. But hot water washes use five times the energy—and create five times the emissions.

### **UUSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Karen Palmer                      President  
Amy Forster-Rothbart

Vice-President

Arlana Young                      Treasurer

Adrienne Martini                  Clerk

Mary Ruhoff                      Moderator

Keith Willcox

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